

To: WDFW Commissioners
Director Anderson

FROM: Puget Sound Recreational Fisheries Enhancement Oversight Committee
(David Croonquist, Rich Eltrich, Don Freeman, David Knutzen, Mike Gilchrist, Clint Muns, Pete Naylor, David Puki, Matt Parnel, Norm Reinhardt)

The Puget Sound Recreational Fisheries Enhancement (PSRFE) Oversight Committee (OC) would like to express our appreciation to Jim Scott, Ron Warren and agency staff. In late October the department presented a proposal to increase overall hatchery Chinook production funded under the PSRFE budget. This increase in production of stocks that contribute strongly to the sport fishery would have come at the cost of closing Lakewood Hatchery Complex. While an increase in production was favorable, the OC was specifically concerned with the closing of Garrison Springs Hatchery within the Lakewood Complex. Of the facilities funded under the PSRFE program Garrison Springs has one of the highest Chinook survival rates, produces fish in the sport catch at the lowest cost per fish rate and is a general mainstay of the sport catch throughout Puget Sound. This was addressed in a November 1st letter to Jim Scott from the OC with cc copies sent to your offices.

Jim Scott worked with the committee and addressed our concerns. The outcome was a beneficial package to the recreational community that kept Garrison Springs production solvent, addressed independent citizen concerns on returning fish passage within the watershed, and resulted in an overall increase in Puget Sound Chinook production. Utilizing the funds that are provided to the department from the sport community to the greatest recreational benefit is the direction the department needs to continue.

This is a positive example of the volunteer advisory process being utilized within the agency. It is great to have our needs, opinions, and recommendations fully evaluated but more importantly it was rewarding to know our recreational dollars will be spent in a manner consistent with the intent of the PSRFE legislation.

The OC looks forward to working with the department in the coming month on the establishment of legislatively required goals for the PSRFE program. Hopefully this process can continue in the same light as the positive outcome of our latest collaboration.